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From the Desk of ...



Congressman Dan Lungren

California

March 16, 2006

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Dear Third District Resident,

As Sacramento area residents know all too well, our region faces an unparalleled threat of catastrophic flood. The confluence of two major rivers, low lying lands, and an aging levee system in disrepair have created an environment ripe for disaster and in need of immediate action. Understanding the seriousness of that threat, I am very pleased with the attention that has been paid to the lack of flood protection in the Sacramento region in the past weeks.

On February 22, Governor Schwarzenegger, Senator Feinstein, Congressman Pombo, Congresswoman Matsui, Sacramento Mayor Heather Fargo, and I participated in an aerial tour of some of the most at risk levees in the Sacramento region. Before boarding the helicopters, we were briefed by the Sacramento Area Flood Control Agency, the California Department of Water Resources, and the US Army Corp of Engineers. They shared valuable information with us regarding the levee system and the particular sights we would see as we flew over Sacramento's downtown area, East Sacramento and South Land Park. ([Click to see video of that tour](#)).

In the hours following our inspection of the Sacramento area levees, Governor Schwarzenegger, citing the severity of the situation and the need for urgency, declared a state of emergency. Though the Governor has designated \$2.5 billion of his \$68 billion bond proposal to increase the Sacramento area's flood protection over the next ten years and asked the federal government to match the state's financial commitment, the designation of the Sacramento levee system as a state of emergency allows the 24 levees most in need of repair to be completed more efficiently.

The Governor's involvement on this issue is a welcome addition to what has been a long and often difficult struggle for members of the California Congressional delegation. Congressman Pombo (CA-11), Congressman Doolittle (CA-04), Congressman Lewis (CA-41), Congresswoman Matsui (CA-05), Congressman Herger (CA-02), Congressman Thompson (CA-01), Senator Feinstein and I are committed to working together to secure adequate flood protection for the California families we represent.

I am also pleased that the President has recognized the need for immediate action and made a financial commitment to addressing the unacceptably high risk of flooding in the Sacramento area. This past fall, I joined a number of California delegates from the House and Senate in a request for funding aimed at protecting the region from a catastrophic flood. The President's 2007 budget submission to the Congress this past month reflects a great deal of those requests; specifically including \$52 million for area flood protection programs and

projects.

Including:

- \$10.9 million for the Sacramento River bank protection project
- \$7.3 million for South Sacramento County Streams
- \$4.4 million for American River Common Features
- \$15 million for continued construction on the Folsom Dam Bridge
- \$8.4 million for the American River Dam Raise
- \$6 million for the American River Folsom Dam Modifications

Today, the Sacramento region has twice the threat from flood water and half the protection than the city of New Orleans before Katrina. The average flood protection in the Sacramento Region is less than 100 years. That means in the life of a 30 year mortgage, a resident has a 26% chance of flood. As a long time resident of the area, I have visited the rivers and levee systems many times and appreciate the beauty of the landscape; but from the air, the fragile balance between the power of the water and the capacity of the aging levee system is all too evident. From all of the evidence I have seen it is apparent that one project would double the protection of any known combination of projects, including those listed above. That project is the long delayed Auburn Dam. With such promise it would be irresponsible not to seriously consider its construction.

Above all else, it is the responsibility of government to secure the safety of its citizens and guard them from harm, whether in the form of a terrorist attack, a natural disaster, or a failure of critical infrastructure. It is our obligation to act with a sense of urgency to ensure the protection of the region and the safety of its residents. We must all understand the importance of making a down payment on the future of the region.

I welcome further dialogue and invite you to attend one of our upcoming Town Hall Meetings which will be held:

Monday, March 20

7:00-9:00pm

Rancho Cordova City Hall
American River Meeting Room
2729 Prospect Park Drive
Rancho Cordova, CA 95670

Saturday, April 22

10:00am-Noon

Rio Vista City Hall
Council Chambers
One Main Street
Rio Vista, CA 94571

If you would like to attend an upcoming town hall and would like to inquire about the availability of services for the hearing impaired, please do not hesitate to contact my district office at (916) 859-9906.

Sincerely,



Daniel E. Lungren
Member of Congress

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